

Fancy Name Plaque

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Here is a project I think you will enjoy making: a name plaque for a child's room or a sewing studio. Use my new **Tall and Skinny** embroidery alphabet to fit even a long name on your fabric. With five sizes of the alphabet to choose from, you can also embroider a favorite saying, a quote, a *bon mot* (witticism), a prayer, or any other text that you've composed.



Determine Dimensions for Materials:

1. **Arrange** your **Tall and Skinny** text using the suggestions in the **Guide to Tall and Skinny** PDF (available through my blog). I recommend maximum embroidery size be, in each dimension, at least 10 mm less than the maximum for your hoop. This will give you room to scoot the design as needed. Record the dimensions in inches here: Width: _____. Height: _____. (*My design is 8.91" wide x 6.69" high.*)
2. **Final dimensions** for your plaque, including the fabric frame. Add at least 3" in each dimension. You will need 1 1/2" of that for the 3/4" of fabric frame that shows on each edge of the plaque. The remainder will give you at least 3/4" of white space around your design. If you want more than 3/4" of white space then you can add more than 3" to your dimensions. You may also add more white space in one dimension than in the other if you want. Width: _____. Height: _____. (*My plaque will be 12" wide by 10" high, 9" + 3" by 7" + 3". [I rounded up for convenience.]*)
3. **Embroidery fabric and fusible fleece.** Add 1/2" to each dimension from Step 2. (You will trim the fabric later.) Width: _____. Height: _____. (*My fabric and fleece will be 12 1/2" wide x 10 1/2" high, 12" + 1/2" by 10" + 1/2".*)
4. **Fabric frame.** Add 3" to each dimension from Step 2. Width: _____. Height: _____. (*My fabric frame will be 15" wide by 13" high, 12" + 3" by 10" + 3".*)
5. **Rod sleeve.** Subtract 2 1/2" from Step 2's **final width dimension**: _____. (*My sleeve will be 9 1/2" wide, 2 1/2" less than 12".*)

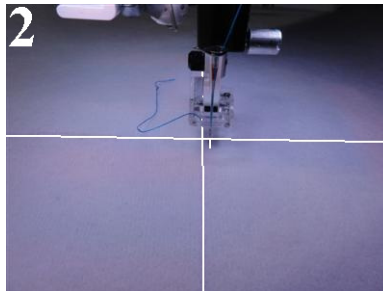
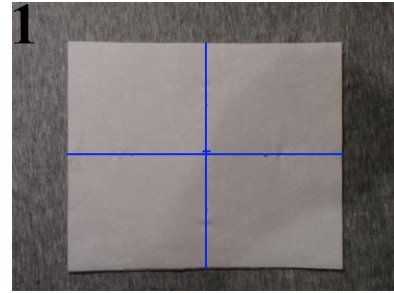
Materials:

1. Fabric for embroidery: Solid or nearly solid quilting cotton or polyester suede fabric. Use dimensions from Step 3 above.
2. Fusible fleece: Use dimensions from Step 3 above.
3. Cotton print fabric for **fabric frame**: Use dimensions from Step 4 above.
4. **Rod sleeve** for hanging the plaque: same or coordinating cotton print fabric. Height is 5"; use width from Step 5 above. (*My rod sleeve is 9 1/2" x 5".*)
5. Embroidery design arranged with **Tall and Skinny** alphabet.
6. Embroidery thread.
7. Medium weight cutaway stabilizer: at least the size of the **final dimensions** and enough for chosen hoop.
8. Thread for sewing, to match or coordinate with fabric frame.
9. Removable marking tool (chalk or fading pen).
10. 5/8" to 3/4" wide wooden dowel or decorative rod for hanging plaque: Slightly narrower than the plaque if you don't want it to show from the front. If you find a decorative rod you might want it wider than the plaque.
11. Yarn or ribbon for hanging plaque.

Prepare and Embroider Fabric:

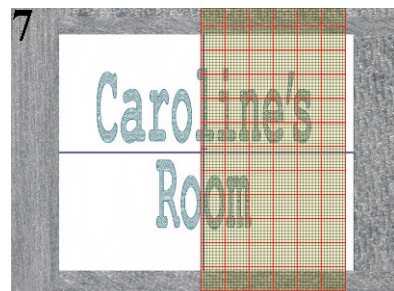
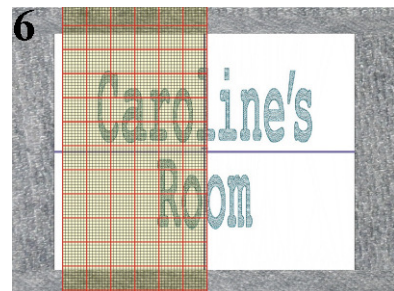
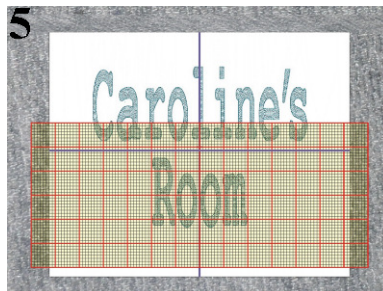
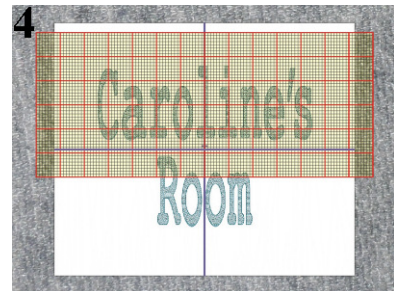
1. Transfer your embroidery design to your embroidery machine. Open the design so that it appears on screen. Note which side of the hoop area will be the top of your design. (*My design is wider than it is high; the top of the design is on the right side of the hoop.*)
2. Press fabric for embroidery. Turn wrong side up on ironing board.
3. Place fusible fleece on top, fusible side down. Steam and then fuse in place, following manufacturer's instructions.

4. Mark horizontal and vertical centering lines.
5. On the vertical centering line, mark a small line 1/8" above the horizontal centering line. (Fig. 1)
(NOTE: The long horizontal line will be the center of the fabric and the small mark will be the center of the embroidery. By moving the center of the embroidery slightly north of center, the embroidery will look more balanced.) (Fig. 1)
6. Steam press stabilizer.
7. Hoop stabilizer. Mark centering lines on the stabilizer, using marks on your inner hoop as a guide.
8. Spray the back of the embroidery fabric with temporary basting spray and position in hoop. Match the horizontal and vertical centering lines on fabric and hoop. Make sure that the small mark is toward the side of the hoop that will be the top of the design.
9. Pin fabric to the stabilizer outside the hoop.
10. Attach the hoop to your embroidery unit.
11. Scoot the design so that the center of the design is at the intersection of the vertical centering line and the small mark. (Fig. 2)
12. Embroider your design. (Fig. 3)
13. Remove your fabric from the hoop. Do not trim stabilizer.



Trim Embroidered Fabric:

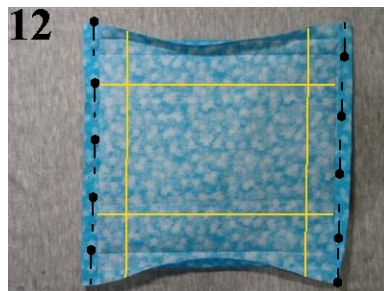
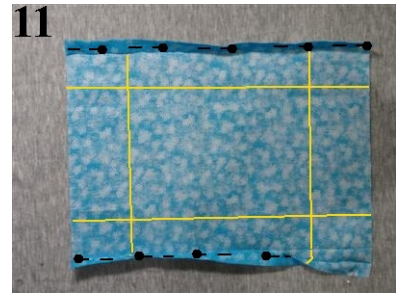
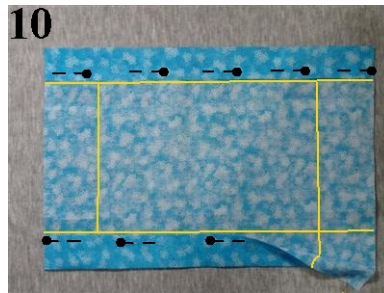
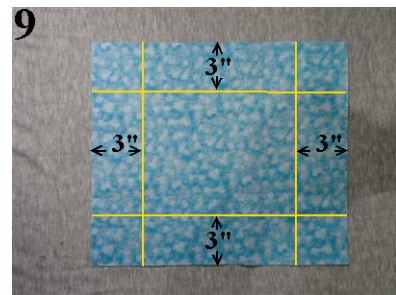
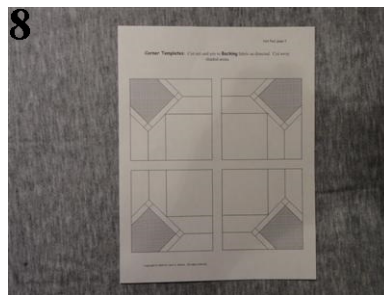
1. You allowed a little extra fabric in case you needed to scoot your design. Now it is time to trim the excess. The embroidered fabric will fit more easily if it is slightly smaller than the **final dimensions**. Copy your **final dimensions** (Step 2) here: Width: _____. Height: _____.
2. Divide the **final height** by two and subtract 1/8". Record the result here. Trim height: _____. (*My trim height will be 4 7/8", which is 1/8" less than 5".*)
3. Align a rotary cutting ruler parallel to the horizontal center of your fabric. (Ignore the small line you added for centering the design.) Your ruler should extend above the horizontal center the distance of the **trim height** you just calculated. (Fig. 4)
4. Trim off the excess fabric. (Note: When you trim your own embroidered fabric you may turn it as you normally would for accurate cutting. These figures are for showing how to position the ruler only.)
5. Position the ruler to trim the excess from the bottom of the fabric. Use the same trim height. (Fig. 5)
6. Divide the **final width** by two and subtract 1/8". Record the result here. Trim width: _____. (*My trim width will be 5 7/8", which is 1/8" less than 6".*)
7. Align a rotary cutting ruler parallel to the vertical center of your fabric. Your ruler should extend beside the vertical center the distance of the **trim width** you just calculated. (Fig. 6)
8. Position the ruler to trim the excess from the opposite side of the fabric. Use the same trim width. (Fig. 7)



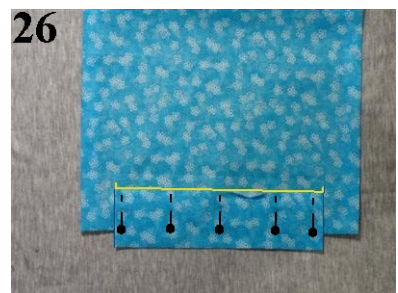
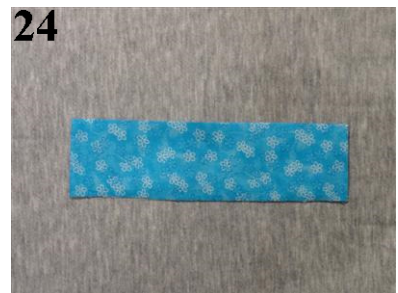
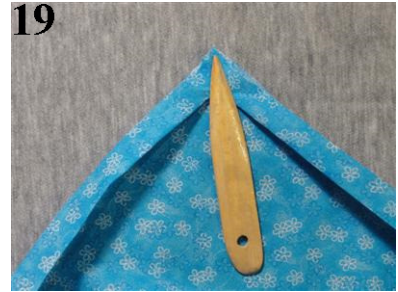
9. Remove basting.
10. Remove marked lines. You may press out chalk markings or dab water on fading or soluble marker lines.

Prepare the backing:

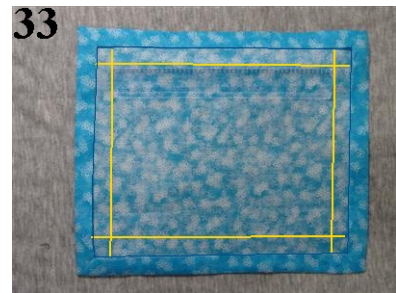
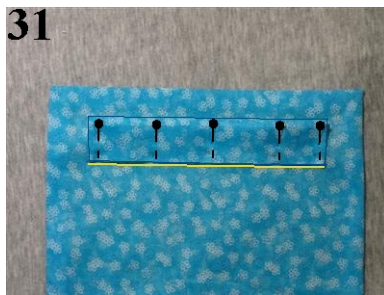
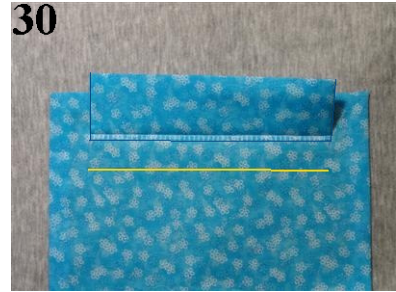
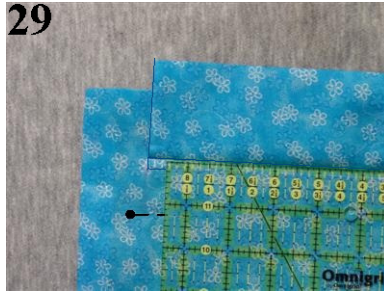
1. Print the Corner Templates from the last page of these instructions. (Fig. 8)
2. Turn frame fabric wrong side up. Mark a line 3" from and parallel to each raw edge. (Fig. 9)
3. On two opposite sides, fold the raw edges to meet the marked lines. Pin in place. Press creases, avoiding the pins when you press. (Fig. 10)
4. Open up the creases. Fold the raw edges to meet the creases. Pin in place. Press creases, avoiding the pins when you press. (Fig. 11)
5. Remove the pins. Fold the edge on both creases and press again.
6. Repeat Steps 3 and 4 to press creases in the remaining two sides. Avoid pressing out the creases at the corners. (Fig. 12)
7. Cut out one of the corner templates. Pin it to a corner, making sure that the creases in the fabric line up with the lines on the template. Mark along the edges that face the corner. (Fig. 13)
8. Remove the template and cut out the corner on the marked line. (Fig. 14)
9. If you prefer, you can cut out the corner with the template in place. (Fig. 15)
10. Repeat for the remaining three corners.
11. Fold one corner wrong sides out so that the raw edges of the corner cut-out are even. Position the corner so that you can sew from the outer edge to the fold. Pin, matching crease lines on both layers of the fabric. (Fig. 16)
12. Reduce stitch length to 1.5 mm.
13. Stitch a 1/4" seam beginning at the raw edge. Pivot when you come to the outer crease and sew off the fold when you come to it. Because the stitch length is so small, there is no need to backstitch. Trim the excess fabric as shown in Figure 17. Clip almost to the stitching on the crease line.



14. Repeat for the remaining corners. You may also do each step for all corners at once if you prefer.
15. Press open the corner seams. A point presser will help you get into the tight corners of the miters. (Fig. 18)
16. Lay the open ends of the **fabric frame** flat against each other. Place a point turner at the corner with the point facing the corner. (Fig. 19)
17. Turn the corner right side out by flipping the **fabric frame** over the point of the point turner.
18. Repeat for the remaining corners.
19. Fold the frame hems in place and press flat. (Fig. 20)
20. Fold the **rod sleeve** fabric in half so that the width is 2 1/2". Pin seams on the two short edges. (Fig. 21)
21. Set machine for normal stitch length (2.5 mm).
22. Stitch 1/4" seams. Trim the corners at the folds diagonally. (Fig. 22)
23. Press seams open. (Fig. 23)
24. Turn the **rod sleeve** right side out and press flat. (Fig. 24)
25. Place the **fabric frame** on the table with the back side of the frame facing up and the edge that you want to be at the top of the plaque toward you.
26. With a removable marker, make a line 1 3/4" from the top edge. Start and end the line 1 1/2" from the side edges. The line should end up the same width as your finished **rod sleeve**. (Fig. 25)
27. Position the raw edges of the **rod sleeve** on the marked line, with the fold extending beyond the **fabric frame**. (Fig. 26)
28. Stitch the rod sleeve to the **fabric frame** with a 1/4" seam/overcast stitch. (Fig. 27)
29. Place your dowel or another cylinder of the same diameter on top of the seam. Wrap the **rod sleeve** around the rod and pin in place, about 1/4" above the fold of the **rod sleeve**. Make sure your rod will slide easily within the **rod sleeve** and that the back of the **fabric frame** remains flat. Place another pin at the fold of the **rod sleeve**. (Fig. 28)



30. Remove the pins that hold the **rod sleeve** in place. Measure the distance between the seam and the pin that marked the fold of the **rod sleeve**. (My distance is 1 1/4".) (Fig. 29)
31. With a removable marker, draw a line below the seam, parallel to the seam and spaced as determined above. Make the line the same width as the **rod sleeve**. (My line is 1 1/4" below the seam line.) (Fig. 30)
32. Turn the **rod sleeve** down so that the fold meets the line marked in the previous step. Pin in place. (Fig. 31)
33. Stitch the **rod sleeve** in place near the fold and again 1/4" above. Backstitch at beginning and end to secure seams. (Fig. 32)
34. Turn the **fabric frame** front side up. Make sure the **rod sleeve** is toward the top. (Fig. 33)



Complete the Plaque:

1. Center the embroidered fabric on top of the **fabric frame** with the top edge of the embroidery at the top of the **fabric frame**.
2. Tuck the embroidered fabric into the **fabric frame**. To prevent shifting, hold the embroidered fabric in place with one hand and tuck a quadrant under the fold of the **fabric frame** with the other. Pin in place, making sure that you will reach the points of the pins before you reach the heads as you sew. (Fig. 34)
3. If available, attach an open toe or utility presser foot.
4. Place your plaque under the presser foot so that the inner fold of the fabric frame butts up against the inside of the left toe of the foot. (Fig. 35)
5. Set your machine for a needle position almost at the far left. Beginning about 1/4" past a corner, stitch through all layers, about 1/8-inch out from the inner fold of the **fabric frame** (closest to the embroidered fabric). Pivot when you come to the mitered seam at each corner and continue stitching. When you return to where you began, set stitch length to 0 and stitch in place for 4 or 5 stitches (or used built-in tie stitch).
6. OPTIONAL: Set your machine for a far right needle position. Stitch again about 1/4" from the inner fold of the **fabric frame**. (Fig. 36)



7. Wrap the ribbon or yarn around one end of the dowel. Tie a loop to secure. (The loop can be loose if you might want to remove the dowel in the future.) Cut the ribbon or yarn long enough to allow it to come to a peak above the plaque. Tie a loop in the free end of the ribbon or yarn. (Fig. 37)
8. Hang plaque from a hook or pin. (Fig. 38)



Corner Templates: Cut out and pin to **fabric frame** fabric as directed. Cut away shaded areas.

